

Meeting of the Heating Advisory Committee on July 18, 2006

Members present: Kevin Bayley, Omer Beaudoin, Steve Dumais, Ken Henrick, Bob Ives, Al Little, Bob Lundergan, Lyndon Rickards, Ken Taylor, Bob Wilkins

The Fire Marshal presented the proposed rules for licensing to the committee and a group from the mechanical inspectors, plumbing board, and supply houses.

Three major areas must be worked on. They are licensing of those who install gas utilization appliances other than heating systems or domestic water heating systems or hearth systems. Creating a sufficient window of time for plumbers and HVAC people who have not participated in any of the approved programs to get the required training without being put out of work. Creating an apprenticeship program.

Here are some suggested solutions for these problems. Please read and let me know how they should be changed.

I Appliance installation and service technician. Individuals engaged in the installation and service of gas utilization equipment other than heating systems, domestic water heating systems, and hearth systems.

1 This specialty license will have four endorsements:

- a Natural gas appliance installation technician
- b Natural gas appliance service technician
- c Liquefied petroleum gas appliance installation technician
- d Liquefied petroleum gas appliance service technician

(I am not familiar with the appliance industry. Do some people only install and others only service appliances? Do some people only deal with natural gas appliances while others only handle liquefied petroleum gas appliances?)

2 Acceptable training programs:

- a. Standard or Maine version of the Basics, Installation and Service modules of the Propane Education and Research Council's Certified Employee Training Program;
- b Core and gas heating service technician module of the North American Training Excellence's Gas Heating Service Technician Training Program;
- c Bay State Gas/Northern Utilities Service Technician training program.

(Do the above training programs provide an individual with the knowledge to work on stoves, clothes dryers, pizza ovens, etc? What type of training is available and utilized by appliance service techs? Do you know of some people from the appliance industry that we can invite to a meeting?)

3 required field experience 4,000 hours ?
(Is this too much time for these appliances?)

II Creating a sufficient window of time for plumbers and HVAC people who have not participated in any of the approved programs to get the required training without being put out of work.

A Provisional License

1 Has the following endorsements:

- a Natural gas installation technician
- b Natural gas service technician
- c Liquefied petroleum gas installation technician
- d Liquefied petroleum gas service technician
- e Hearth system installation and service technician
- f Appliance service and installation technician

2 Minimum field experience: 4,000 hours of appropriate field experience or hold a Master's or Journeyman's Plumbing License.

3 Term: This license expires in 2 years. It is NOT RENEWABLE.

4 The licensee MUST PARTICIPATE IN AN APPROVED TRAINING PROGRAM.

5 Should an applicant have to pass a written test? (I am deeply concerned about this. Many technicians in our industry are frightened to death by written tests. If we require a written test, I feel a significant number of individuals will simply not take it and continue to work without pulling permits. This will create a more dangerous situation because we will not have inspectors checking these individuals' work.

The training programs will help to allay their fears by preparing the technicians for the tests, building their self confidence, getting them use to taking tests, and studying.

This method will not create any additional danger to the public as these individuals are already doing this work. In two years all of these techs will either have passed the tests or be removed from licensing.)

III Creating an apprenticeship program.

A Fuel gas fitter license. This is a trainee license.

1 It will have the following endorsements:

- a Natural gas installation technician
- b Natural gas service technician
- c Liquefied petroleum gas installation technician
- d Liquefied petroleum gas service technician
- e Hearth system installation and service technician
- f Appliance service and installation technician

2 Requirements for a fuel gas fitter license.

a Individual must be employed by a company and actually doing the same type of work as his license endorsement(s) (example: If his license is endorsed for natural gas installation and service, then he must actually be doing that work.)

b Individual must complete a training program that is approved for his specific endorsement(s).

c Field training hours.

1 The licensee must work under the direct supervision of a technician whose specialty license(s) match the trainee's endorsements for the first 2000 hours of employment.

2 For the next 2000 hours the licensee may work independently. However his work must be checked and approved in writing by a technician whose specialty license(s) match the trainee's endorsements, **BEFORE THE EQUIPMENT CAN BE PUT INTO SERVICE.**

3 This license is **NOT RENEWABLE.**
(The purpose of the training hours is to make training affordable for smaller companies. The purpose of the non renewable feature is to avoid permanent trainees.)

I don't pretend that these are the definitive answers to our problems. I intend them to be talking points to begin our discussions. Please let me know what you think. You can either e-mail at caller18@aol.com or we can discuss it at the next meeting on Thursday, July 27th, 9:00 AM at the Fire Academy.

Thank you for your help.

Al Little